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FM AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0154
INFO RUEHGZ/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE 0075
RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC 0072
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC 0072
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC 0006
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//USDP/ISA/AP// 0003
RHMFISS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC//J2/J3/J5// 0001
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J2/J3/J5// 0011

UNCLAS GUANGZHOU 000055

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/CM, OES/IHA, MED, CA/OCS/ACS/EAP
STATE PASS TO ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP
HHS PASS TO OGHA, NIH/FIC, CDC/COGH AND FLU DIV TMOUNTS AND NCOX
USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS
BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC, USAID
BEIJING FOR HHS HEALTH ATTACHE AND RMO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [CASC](#) [SOCI](#) [PREL](#) [HK](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: AVIAN FLU UPDATE: GUANGXI TEEN BECOMES FIFTH AI FATALITY IN CHINA IN 2009

¶1. (U) Summary: Mindful of the need for transparency on pandemic diseases, Chinese authorities released information that an 18-year old in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region had become China's fifth H5N1 avian influenza (AI) fatality of 2009. Possible sources of the infection under investigation; no additional illnesses have been reported. Guangxi has launched an emergency AI action plan amidst continued monitoring and oversight from the national Ministry of Health. End summary.

¶2. (U) Media reports confirm that an 18-year old, surnamed Liang, died from the H5N1 strand of avian influenza (AI). The man reportedly first exhibited signs of the illness on January 19, while in Guangxi's Beilu city. Following tests for H5N1, the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) confirmed that he had contracted the virus. Liang was transferred to a local Red Cross hospital on January 24, where he died on January 26. According to staff at the Guangxi Department of Health, Emergency Response Office, Liang is from a village area, and may have come into contact with sick chickens. The source of the infection remains under investigation.

¶3. (U) On January 26, Guangxi authorities launched a Level II Public Health Incident Emergency Response Plan. According to authorities, the action plan includes establishing a human AI taskforce, headed by the Hospital Administration of the Guangxi Department of Health, which will monitor those who came in close contact with Liang and conduct epidemiological investigations. The action plan also involves strengthening the management of fever-related illnesses at local hospitals and clinics; there will be additional health publicity campaigns. According to protocol, this case has been reported to the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macau.

¶4. (U) As part of ongoing efforts, on January 22, the national Ministry of Health sent a taskforce to Guangxi to inspect SARS and human AI prevention and control work. Inspectors highlighted the following problems: a lack of self-protection among doctors treating ill patients, failure to investigate patients' epidemiological history, a lack of pre-screening techniques in hospitals, and poor hygiene in wet markets where poultry are slaughtered and sold. The national Ministry of Health will continue to discharge monthly SARS and AI inspection teams to Guangxi hospitals and wildlife markets through March 2009.

15. (U) This cable was coordinated with Embassy Beijing.

GOLDBERG